

**St Michael's and All Angels Church Twerton**  
**Parish Safeguarding Handbook 2023-2024**  
**24<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

## **Model Parish Safeguarding Policy, Church of England**

### **'Promoting a Safer Church'**

***The following policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting held on ----24<sup>th</sup> May 2023-----***

***The policy will be reviewed annually and the next review date is 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024***

#### ***Introduction***

*St Michael and All Angels Church is committed to fostering an environment where everyone is able to worship and participate in the life of the church in safety. The Church recognises the personal dignity and rights of all children and adults and promotes a culture which listens to children, young people and adults at risk. We ensure that when concerns are raised, they are taken seriously and dealt with appropriately in accordance with the Diocese of Bath and Wells Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and the relevant statutory legislation and guidance for the welfare of children, young people, and adults. We want to provide a safe, happy and supportive environment of mission and ministry in which all God's people can grow together in their Christian faith.*

***Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility***

- *All who work for the Church, including clergy, employees and volunteers, are expected to adhere to the safeguarding policy, action plan and associated procedures and practice guidance.*
- *We commit ourselves to this policy and to the development of sound procedures to ensure the safeguarding of all children, young people and adults at risk, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity or ability.*
- *We aim to create and maintain an open and transparent culture that reflects the importance of safeguarding of everyone.*

***The Church will:***

- *Promote a safer environment and culture to thrive together in Christian faith.*

- *Challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.*
- *Safely recruit and support all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.*
- *Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.*
- *Care pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse/neglect/harm/discrimination/racism and other affected persons.*
- *Respond to those that may pose a present risk to others.*
- *Keep under review our policy, operational procedures and practice guidance.*

#### ***Guidance on Reporting requirements***

##### ***STAGE 1 – THE WORKER***

- *The duty of the person who receives information or who has a concern about the welfare of a child, young person or adult at risk is to RECOGNISE the concerns, make a RECORD in writing and RESPOND by passing on their concerns to the designated person for safeguarding (DPS). If he/she is not contactable, or they are implicated in the situation, another member of the church Safeguarding Team should be contacted instead.*

- *Concerns should be passed on to the DPS within 24 hours of it being raised. If anyone is considered to be in imminent danger of harm, a report should be made immediately to the police by calling 999. If such a report is made without reference to the DPS, they should be informed as soon as possible afterwards.*
- *If concerns arise in the context of children's or adult at risk work, the worker who has the concern may in the first instance wish to talk it through with their group leader, where appropriate. However, such conversations should not delay concerns being passed on to the DPS. It should be clear that the duty remains with the worker to record and pass on their concerns to the DPS.*
- *If an issue concerns an adult at risk who does not give permission to pass on the information to anyone else, the worker should explain that they will need to speak with the DPS, who will have greater expertise in dealing with the issue at hand.*
- *If a concern is brought to the attention of a group leader by one of the workers, the leader should remind the worker of their duty to record and report and will also themselves have a duty to pass on the concern to the DPS.*
- *A written record using the standard incident report form should be made as soon as possible after a child or adult at risk tells you about harmful behaviour, or an incident takes place that gives cause for concern.*

*The record should:*

- *Be hand-written as soon as possible after the event.*
- *Be clear and state the facts accurately (when hand-written notes are typed up later the original hand-written notes should be retained).*
- *Include the child or adult at risk's name, address, date of birth (or age if the date of birth is not known).*
- *Include the nature of the concerns/allegation/disclosure.*
- *Include a description of any bruising or other injuries that you may have noticed.*
- *Include an exact record of what the child or adult at risk has said, using their own words where possible.*
- *Include what was said by the person to whom the concerns were reported.*
- *Include any action taken as a result of the concerns.*
- *Be signed and dated.*
- *Be kept secure, confidential and made available only to the Safeguarding Team, the church minister, representatives of any statutory authorities.*

**STAGE 2 – THE DESIGNATED PERSON FOR SAFEGUARDING (DPS)**

*The duty of the DPS on receiving a report is to REVIEW the concern that they have received and REPORT the concern on to the appropriate people, where necessary.*

***The duty to REVIEW***

*In reviewing the report that is received, the DPS:*

- *Should consider their level of experience and expertise in assessing risk to children or adults at risk.*
- *Must consider any other reports that have been received concerning the same individual or family.*
- *May speak with others in the church where appropriate (including the Minister and church Safeguarding Team, unless allegations involve them) who may have relevant information and knowledge that would impact on any decision being made.*
- *May consult with other agencies to seek guidance and advice in knowing how to respond appropriately to the raised concerns.*

***The duty to REPORT***

*The DPS will decide who the report should be referred on to, working in conjunction with the church Safeguarding Team where appropriate.*

*They may:*

- *Refer to the worker who made the initial report if there is little evidence that a child or adult at risk is being harmed.*
- *Refer the concern to others who work with the child or adult at risk in question, asking for continued observation where appropriate.*
- *Inform parents / carers under certain circumstances, where doing so would not present any further risk of harm.*
- *Make a formal referral to the police or local Social Services team.*
- *For adults at risk, concerns will only be referred to the police or Social Services without consent where: ( the person lacks the mental capacity to make such a choice, there is a risk of harm to others, in order to prevent a crime)*
- *A record should be kept of all safeguarding incidents and should be considered in the annual review of the church's safeguarding policy. All original reports should be retained safely and securely by the DPS and a written record should be made of the actions taken.*

### **STAGE 3 – THE NEXT STEPS**

*Responsibilities to REPORT and SUPPORT in stage 3 of the process are shared by the church Safeguarding Team and the Minister.*

#### **The duty to SUPPORT**

*Once concerns, suspicions and disclosures of abuse have been addressed, the church continues to have a responsibility to offer support to all those who have been affected, including: Victims; Alleged perpetrators; Children; Adults at risk; Other family members; Church workers; Church Safeguarding Team; Minister; Leadership Team.*

#### **The duty to REPORT**

*If a church worker has been accused of causing harm to children, young people or adults at risk this would be classed as a serious incident that should be reported to the Charity Commission by those churches that are registered with the Charity Commission. If a worker has been removed from their post or would have been removed from their post because of the risk of harm that they pose to children, young people or adults at risk, there is also a statutory duty to report the incident to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).*



### ***Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities***

*St Michael and All Angels has filled several important posts that underpin effective safeguarding in the church. These notes outline the main responsibilities relating to safeguarding connected with key leadership roles.*

#### ***Trustees / Deacons***

- *Ultimately responsible for safeguarding.*
- *Responsible for the implementation of policy and procedures.*
- *Responsible for supporting the church workers.*
- *Responsible for raising awareness about best practice within the church.*
- *Responsible for ensuring that the relevant people have received the appropriate training.*

***Designated Person for Safeguarding***

- *Receives all reports of concerns regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk.*
- *Listens, observes and passes on those concerns appropriately, having taken advice from the relevant people.*
- *Acts as a link between the church and other agencies or bodies on safeguarding matters.*

***Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) administrator***

- *Responsible for all aspects of processing DBS checks for church staff and volunteers (with the exception of the accredited minister who is checked by the regional association)*

***The Minister***

- *Shares with the trustees the general responsibility for the adoption and implementation of the church's safeguarding policy*
- *Takes responsibility for ensuring that the pastoral needs of all are being met*

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**Safeguarding team**

*St Michael and All Angels Church is committed to managing safeguarding concerns and promoting Safeguarding through its Safeguarding Team. A Parish Safeguarding Officer will take responsibility for dealing with all reported concerns, disclosures and allegations of a safeguarding nature. Each person who works within this church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.*

*This church appoints Qamar Rafiq as the Parish Safeguarding Officer*

*Incumbent:*



*Churchwardens:*



**Date: 24 May 2023**

## **Reporting & further support**

All safeguarding concerns should be reported to the parish safeguarding officer by email: [safeguarding@marlbrook.org](mailto:safeguarding@marlbrook.org)

If you feel your concerns are not being taken seriously or you have concerns about a member of clergy or church leadership then please do contact the Bath & Wells Diocese safeguarding team. You will be treated with courtesy and respect.

### **Ways to report a concern**

- [Online reporting form](#) – It is important when receiving a referral for us to have as much information as possible. As such the most effective way to report a concern is via this route. You will receive a response to a new urgent referral within 24 hours.
- [Contact the team directly.](#)
- Reporting confidentially – There may be occasions when you do not feel able to provide your personal details with a safeguarding concern. In this instance, you can write to Ben Goodhind, Safeguarding Manager, Diocese of Bath and Wells, Flourish House, Wells BA5 1FD

### **Support for survivors of abuse** **Safe Spaces**

[Safe Spaces](#) is an independent charity that offers emotional support and advocacy services for victims and survivors of church related abuse.

Contact Safe Spaces via telephone on 0300 303 1056 or email [safespaces@splitz.org](mailto:safespaces@splitz.org)

## **Statutory and voluntary sector agency contacts**

Please note our role is to manage safeguarding concerns within the church setting. In your roles or general life you may come across safeguarding concerns relating to other settings. Whilst we can provide some level of advice, these need to be reported to statutory agencies of which you can find details below.

If you are faced with an emergency situation please call 999.

- Somerset Safeguarding Adult Concerns - [Report a concern](#)
- Somerset Safeguarding Children Concerns - [Useful Contacts and Links](#)
- Banes Child or vulnerable adults concerns - [Report a concern](#)